



Ministry  
of the  
Environment

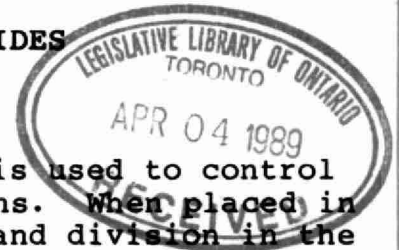
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Minister

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## about pesticides

NUMBER: 40-01-24  
DATE: April 1988

### THE PROPER USE OF 2,4-D AND OTHER PESTICIDES BY HOUSEHOLDERS



The herbicide 2,4-D (2,4-Dichlorophenoxyacetic acid) is used to control a wide variety of broad-leaf weeds in lawns and gardens. When placed in contact with a plant it causes rapid cell metabolism and division in the plant, which quickly dies. Numerous products containing 2,4-D are available on the domestic market and it is often mixed with other herbicides, such as mecoprop and dicamba.

Since all pesticides (which include herbicides) are potentially hazardous they must be used carefully by complying with recommended safety procedures. Essential safety practices to maintain environmental quality and protect human health are outlined below.

#### Good Practices for Safe Handling, Application, Storage and Disposal of Domestic 2,4-D Products

1. Before selecting any herbicide, carefully consider non-chemical methods, such as hand-pulling of weeds and improved turf management programs. If a herbicide is required, ensure that the weed pest you wish to control is listed on the label. Use only the quantity recommended and only where weeds are growing.
2. Select a formulation that will minimize off-target exposure. Granular formulations or weed-and-feed products reduce drift. Ready-to-use products, when available, can reduce user exposure. Purchase only as much as you need to use at one time.
3. Read the Label before you use the product. The Registered Label is the final authority for the use of a pesticide. You can control weeds in your lawn or garden and do it safely, if you use the herbicide properly, according to label directions.
4. Label precautions on many domestic products recommend that skin and eye contact be avoided. This can be done by wearing a long-sleeved shirt, long pants and rubber or neoprene gloves when mixing or applying. Rubber boots will protect the feet and lower legs; goggles or a full face visor will protect the eyes. Avoid splashing, and work carefully to prevent accidental spills.

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5. Do not use household utensils, such as spoons and cups, to measure and mix any pesticide. Use measuring cups set aside for this purpose and store them with the pesticides. Separate measuring devices should be used for herbicides, insecticides and fungicides.
6. Do not place the spray tank into a laundry tub or kitchen sink in order to mix pesticides. Place the tank on level ground outdoors away from children and pets, half fill it with water, add the correct amount of herbicide as stated on the label, rinse the measuring cup three times into the sprayer, then top up with water to provide the correct concentration. The measuring cup should then be washed with detergent to decontaminate it.
7. If you spill pesticide on your skin or clothing, immediately remove all contaminated clothing and wash your skin with soap and water. If you spill it on the ground, absorb it with sand, earth or other non-combustible absorbent material, then flush the area with soap and water. Place the contaminated absorbent material in a plastic bag and dispose of it with your household garbage.
8. Never eat, drink or smoke while working with any pesticide.
9. Wash hands and face thoroughly with soap and water after using a pesticide before eating, drinking, smoking or using toilet facilities. Wash thoroughly when finished for the day and change into clean clothing. Launder clothes in hot water **separately** from other laundry.
10. Do not touch or wipe eyes, nose, forehead, lips, or other parts of your body with hands or clothing which may have been splashed with pesticides.
11. Store the remaining concentrate in a locked cupboard in the original container with the label intact, so that it is inaccessible to children, pets, livestock and wildlife. **Never** transfer a pesticide into any other container, e.g., a soft drink bottle.
12. Rinse empty containers three times into spray tank prior to disposal. Wrap individual containers in several layers of newspaper, tie securely and place in sealed trash receptacle or plastic garbage bag to be deposited with your domestic garbage.
13. Do not spray herbicides when wind is blowing strongly enough to cause the spray to drift onto unintended areas. Damage will occur if herbicide is permitted to drift onto vegetables, fruits, ornamentals or other desirable vegetation. Avoid spraying if rain is forecast within 24 hours, as rain may reduce the effectiveness of the treatment.

14. Recent studies have shown that when 2,4-D is applied to turf grass, less than 5% of the herbicide can be brushed off onto exposed skin immediately after application. This figure drops to less than 1% after three days and less than 0.01% after seven days. Rainfall or watering of the lawn also reduces residues significantly if it occurs within the first day of spraying.

#### First-Aid

If 2,4-D is ingested, take the patient immediately to your nearest hospital, taking the label with you. For skin contact, remove contaminated clothing, wash exposed area with soap and water and launder clothing.

**Remember** - apply pesticides:

- ° To a correctly identified pest
- ° Only when necessary
- ° Only where needed
- ° In recommended amounts
- ° According to label directions and precautions



**PESTICIDES ARE POISONS —  
TREAT THEM AS SUCH**